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January 8, 2003

TO: Each Supervisor

FROM: Thomas L. Garthwaite, M.D.
Director and Chief Medical Director

SUBJECT: **BIOTERRORISM ACTION PLAN MONTHLY STATUS REPORT**

As requested by your Board, this is the monthly status report on activities related to the bioterrorism action plan.

Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) Funds—\$3.6 million

EMS Agency staff continues to participate on the Statewide HRSA Advisory Committee which convened this month to review the Hospital Needs Assessment conducted statewide. The survey resulted in approximately a 70% response rate from hospitals, including Los Angeles County hospitals, both public and private. Weaknesses identified by the hospitals include lack of Personal Protective Equipment, pharmaceutical caches, decontamination capabilities and terrorism training. These areas are consistent with those specifically identified for and funded to Los Angeles County through this direct program and are reflected in the Agreements for the 9-1-1 receiving hospitals wanting to participate in the HRSA project.

The HRSA Regional Project Officer assigned to the western region, Brad Austin, spent two days in Los Angeles reviewing progress on the grant and attending the HRSA Hospital Advisory Committee meeting.

The CAO is reviewing a proposal to lease a building as a Disaster Staging Facility for County-sponsored disaster response teams utilizing HRSA and other funds. Despite full State and Federal grant funding, the CAO continues to require additional information and justification.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Funds—\$24.6 million

The Department has submitted the Los Angeles County Smallpox Preparedness, Response and Recovery Plan to the CDC by the December 1, 2002 submission deadline. The Plan was reviewed at the recent Bioterrorism Advisory and HRSA Advisory Committees and input incorporated into the final document.

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The Department has completed Phase I of the Interim Smallpox Vaccination Plan and conducted several meetings with various stakeholders during the development process. The CDC BT Advisory Committee, Long Beach and Pasadena Health Departments, several fire department representatives and others were included. The Plan, submitted on December 9, will be evaluated by the CDC. Upon approval, the CDC will release vaccine to inoculate Public Health response teams and healthcare teams at each participating 9-1-1 receiving hospital as well as the two Veteran's Hospitals in Los Angeles. This is a completely volunteer program and hospitals are still responding to indicate their willingness to participate in the program. Upon completion of this Phase, Federal officials have indicated that Phase II, intended to vaccinate first responders (police, fire and EMS personnel) and all other healthcare workers will begin shortly thereafter. Phase III, offering vaccine to the general public, is to take place after the licensing of the new vaccine sometime late in 2003 or early 2004.

Under the direction of the CDC, the Department is developing a Forensics Epidemiology Course which will be offered to health, law and fire personnel on January 15 & 16, 2003. The course will be designed to develop a broader understanding of the integrated roles of health, law and fire departments during a biological terrorist event investigation.

As requested, your Board will continue to be provided with monthly updates on these grants and terrorism preparedness activities. The Department continues to work with the CAO to ensure that grant funding is obtained and maximized properly. Please let me know if you have any questions.

TLG:vph
203:006 and C/R 111:005

c: Chief Administrative Officer
County Counsel
Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors

bc: Director, EMS Agency
Director of Public Health
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